

U.S. Patent Application No. 09/829,573
Reply to Office Action dated July 24, 2006

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PATENT
450100-03152

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-22 are currently pending. Claims 1, 8, 13, 19 and 21 are independent. Claims 1, 8, 13, 19 and 21 have been amended in this response. Claims 6, 12, 15 have been cancelled. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,959,945 to Kleiman (hereinafter, merely "Kleiman") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,226,618 to Downs et al (hereinafter merely "Downs").

Claims 6, 12 and 15 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 6, 12 and 15 have been canceled and independent claims 1, 8, 13, 19 and 21 have been amended to include the limitations of the former claims and therefore, Applicants submit that these claims, as amended,

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are now in condition for allowance. The other claims are dependent from the independent claims, discussed above, and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons.

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CONCLUSION

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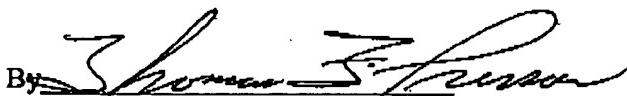
In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are in condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
Attorneys for Applicants

By 
Thomas F. Presson
Reg. No. 41,442
(212) 588-0800